

**Limited Amendment TranPlan 21 to Comply with  
SAFETEA-LU: Draft Policy Statement and Supporting  
Background Material**

*Task 2.2 – New Consultations*

# Draft Report

*prepared for*

**Montana Department of Transportation**

*prepared by*

**Cambridge Systematics, Inc.**

## Draft Policy Statement – New Consultations

SAFETEA-LU requires states to consider the concerns of Federal, State, and Tribal agencies in the transportation planning process. In the development of the statewide long-range transportation plans, the state's level of interagency involvement should include consultation with regional agencies, and Federal, State, and Tribal planning agencies. To meet this requirement, MDT conducted new consultations as part of the Limited Amendment of *TranPlan21*. SAFETEA-LU requirements and elements of the *TranPlan 21 2002 Update* that highlight interagency efforts are presented in this report. In addition, an overview of other MDT efforts and a summary of the new consultations process and review of other agency plans which was conducted for the Limited Amendment of *TranPlan 21* are presented below. The resulting policy statements were developed in consideration of existing MDT efforts and information obtained through this new consultations effort.

### ■ SAFETEA-LU Requirements

The final planning rule for SAFETEA-LU revises the previous planning factor, requiring State and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) to develop long-range transportation plans in consultation with other agencies. The following definitions are included in the 23 CFR 450.104:

- *Consideration* means that one or more parties takes into account the opinions, action, and relevant information from other parties in making a decision or determining a course of action.
- *Cooperation* means that the parties involved in carrying out the transportation planning and programming processes work together to achieve a common goal or objective.
- *Coordination* means the cooperative development of plans, programs, and schedules among agencies and entities with legal standing and adjustment of such plans, programs, and schedules to achieve general consistency, as appropriate.

The definition of "consultation" provided in the 23 CFR Section 450.104 does not apply to the new requirement in SAFETEA-LU regarding "consultation" performed by the States in comparing the long range transportation plan to State and Tribal conservation plans, maps, or inventories of natural or historic resources. This is defined by the 23 CFR Section 450.214(i) as provided below.

SAFETEA-LU expands upon prior coordination requirements, requiring inter-agency consultations in the transportation planning process which previously considered non-metropolitan consultations. The following sections of the 23 CFR pertain to interagency consideration, cooperation, and consultation:

- **23 CFR Section 450.208(a)** – In carrying out the statewide transportation planning process, each State shall, at a minimum: (3) Consider the concerns of Federal land management agencies that have jurisdiction over land within the boundaries of the State; (4) Consider the concerns of local elected and appointed officials with responsibilities for transportation in non-metropolitan areas; (5) Consider the concerns of Indian Tribal governments that have jurisdiction over land within the boundaries of the State; (6) Consider related planning activities being conducted outside of metropolitan planning areas and between States;
- **23 CFR Section 450.214(f)** – Within each metropolitan area of the State, the long-range statewide transportation plan shall be developed in cooperation with the affected MPOs.
- **23 CFR Section 450.214(g)** – For non-metropolitan areas, the long-range statewide transportation plan shall be developed in consultation with affected non-metropolitan officials with responsibility for transportation using the State’s consultation process(es) established under Section 450.210(b).
- **23 CFR Section 450.214(h)** – For each area of the State under the jurisdiction of an Indian Tribal government, the long-range transportation plan shall be developed in consultation with the Tribal government and the Secretary of the Interior consistent with § 450.210(c).
- **23 CFR Section 450.214(i)** – The long-range statewide transportation plan shall be developed, as appropriate, in consultation with State, Tribal, and local agencies responsible for land use management, natural resources, environmental protection, conservation, and historic preservation. This consultation shall involve comparison of transportation plans to State and Tribal conservation plans or maps, if available, and comparison of transportation plans to inventories of natural or historic resources, if available.

## ■ ***TranPlan 21 and Other MDT Actions***

### ***TranPlan 21 2002 Update***

Policy goals and action items in the *TranPlan 21 2002 Update* direct MDT towards working and coordinating with other federal, state, local, and tribal agencies in the Plan’s development. These goals and actions, by element, are presented below.

#### ***Roadway System Performance***

- **Policy Goal A** – Establish explicit priorities for roadway improvements.  
First Priority – Preservation of Montana’s Existing Highway System  
Second Priority – Capacity Expansion and Mobility Improvements  
Third Priority – Other Improvements
- **Action A.2** – Provide and disseminate transportation system performance information.

- **Action A.4** – Assist local jurisdictions to improve their pavement management practices and to support their use of pavement management systems.
- **Policy Goal B** – Preserve Mobility for people and industry in Montana.
- **Action B.4** – Inform local planning and development officials of the State’s desire to preserve key transportation corridors, encourage and assist local jurisdictions to address right-of-way preservation in local land use plans, access management programs, and to support MDT objectives for these transportation corridors.
- **Policy Goal C** – Improve the productivity of the roadway system.
- **Action C.3** – Encourage the metropolitan planning organization areas to include enhanced traffic control and management systems in their long-range plans.

### *Economic Development*

- **Policy Goal A** – Preserve the efficient functioning of the transportation system used by Montana’s export-oriented (“basic”) industries to access regional, national, and international markets.
- **Action A.6** – Provide technical support to Montana communities and airport operators to preserve the federal Essential Air Service program in cooperation with the Governor’s Task Force.
- **Policy Goal B** – Monitor and address capacity needs arising from Montana’s economic growth trends.
- **Action B.2** – Identify and address deficiencies in the strategic transportation network.
- **Policy Goal C** – Support state and local economic development initiatives to maximize new economic opportunities.
- **Action C.1** – Support business retention, recruiting, and other related activities of the Governor’s Office of Economic Opportunity.
- **Action C.2** – Establish an economic opportunities to help fund roadway projects that support business attraction and retention efforts.
- **Action C.3** – Coordinate with and provide support to local economic development initiatives.
- **Policy Goal D** – Support the tourism industry through promoting access to recreational, historic, cultural, and scenic destinations
- **Action D.3** – Coordinate with federal agencies, tribal governments, neighboring states, and Canadian provinces.
- **Policy Goal E** – Develop MDT’s organizational capacity to support economic development.
- **Action E.5** – Provide technical support and information so that economic development needs are considered in MPO planning, MDT corridor planning, and project development.

## ***Land Use Planning***

- **Policy Goal A** – Provide technical support and leadership to encourage local jurisdictions to support transportation corridor preservation and management through their land use planning and development permitting authority.
- **Action A.1** – Work with local jurisdictions to create a “tool kit” of actions that they can take to support corridor preservation through their development review and land use planning authority.
- **Action A.2** – Work with local jurisdictions in the early identification of urban and rural corridors under development pressure.
- **Action A.3** – Continue to support local government transportation planning activities and ensure new urban areas have transportation plans to guide system development.
- **Action A.4** – Maintain MDT’s capability to provide land use driven travel demand forecasting for MPOs.
- **Policy Goal B** – Consistently apply MDT’s System Impact Action Process to ensure developers equitably mitigate their impacts to the highway system.
- **Action B.1** – Provide technical support to local governments in developing funding partnerships to accelerate project development.
- **Action B.3** – Provide training and support on application of access management and Systems Impact Action Process to local governments and MDT staff.

## ***Traveler Safety***

- **Policy Goal B** – Provide leadership and coordinate with other Montana agencies to improve traveler safety.
- **Action B.1** – Establish and maintain high-level statewide inter-agency coordination to improve traveler safety and develop an agenda for action.
- **Action B.2** – Provide leadership and support to implement the results of Action B.1.

## ***Public Transportation***

- **Policy Goal A** – Promote and support increased use of public transportation systems.
- **Action A.1** – Support local promotional/educational programs to publicize public transportation opportunities.
- **Action A.2** – Ensure highway improvements address public transportation needs.
- **Action A.4** – Coordinate state planning, urban area and transit system development planning and management.
- **Action A.5** – Assist communities to establish transit systems to meet future travel demands.
- **Policy Goal B** – Preserve existing intercity public transportation service and encourage/facilitate the development of new services.

- **Action B.1** – Promote the use of, and communicate the availability of Section 5311(f) funds for intercity passenger service.
- **Action B.2** – Support the provision of intercity bus service through TransADE.
- **Action B.3** – Work to improve intermodal passenger facilities.
- **Policy Goal C** – Work to improve service to social service passengers and the transportation disadvantaged – the elderly, children at risk, low income, and persons with disabilities – through interagency coordination.
- **Action C.1** – Improve state agencies and local provider cooperation in funding coordination.
- **Policy Goal D** – Identify and implement transportation demand management actions that will work in Montana.
- **Action D.1** – Continue to work with metropolitan planning organizations and urban areas to include demand-side strategies in their plans.
- **Action D.2** – Work with other state agencies to develop a transportation demand management program for state government.

### ***Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation***

- **Policy Goal A** – Institutionalize bicycle and pedestrian modes.
- **Action A.2** – Work with the Department of Commerce to maintain bicycle-related tourist guides and information.
- **Action A.3** – Assist other units of government to provide transportation facilities that encourage or consider use by bicycles and pedestrians.
- **Policy Goal B** – Target bicycle and pedestrian improvements to account for differences in current and future use.
- **Action B.1** – Identify the most significant bicycle routes designated through metropolitan planning organization and urban area plans and selected rural “touring routes” with the greatest demand or potential demand as the basis for planning and system improvement decisions.

### **Other MDT Actions**

#### ***Corridor Studies***

MDT’s corridor planning process plays an important part in engaging resource agencies early in the transportation planning process. The corridor planning process helps identify environmental sensitivities, avoidance areas, and/or potential mitigation measures prior to the formal NEPA process. It also provides an opportunity to compare existing plans and maps of natural and historic resources at a corridor level in an effort to ensure coordination of activities and address areas of inconsistencies.

MDT currently conducts and plans to continue using these corridor-level studies to analyze the need for improvements, including cost effective/low-cost corridor

management strategies such as TDM, incident, and access management strategies, and intersection improvement strategies. This process is used to inform the NEPA /MEPA process, to screen and eliminate alternatives to be studied, and to define the purpose and needs statements used during NEPA/MEPA. Achieving early consensus on these items amongst the resource agencies is an important goal of this process. The corridor planning process is intended to reduce the cost of the environmental process, speed project delivery, and provides early involvement of environmental interest, regulatory agencies, and the public. The corridor studies also address broader issues than traditional environmental analysis such as land use planning and socioeconomic conditions. The corridor planning process complements the NEPA/MEPA process and ensures decisions are made at the appropriate level, considers low-cost alternatives and available funding. MDT will continue to use this corridor planning process to support *TranPlan 21* and state and other corridor-specific planning across the state.

### ***Biennial Stakeholder Survey***

In addition to this limited amendment *TranPlan 21*, MDT manages a continuing *TranPlan 21* public and stakeholder involvement process that periodically seeks input from resource agencies (local, state and federal), Native American Tribes, and other interests through the biennial *TranPlan 21 Stakeholder Survey*. This survey includes separate survey categories for city and county officials so MDT can identify issues and concerns of each group. In addition to asking for opinions on a variety of transportation system issues including the statewide planning process, the survey includes an open-ended opportunity for each recipient to comment on issues of concern to them. MDT provides the survey results, including the comments, to MDT Administrators, the Transportation Commission, and other transportation decision makers.

### ***MEDA Working Group***

The Montana Economic Developers Association (MEDA) is an association of economic development professionals, consisting of members and employees of the private and public sectors. The MEDA promotes and fosters economic development activities in the state of Montana. MDT has established an on-going cooperative relationship with MEDA and its primary state partner, the Montana Department of Commerce (MDOC), to facilitate interagency involvement through conferences, meetings, mailings, and regular communication. As part of the Limited Amendment of *TranPlan 21*, MDT met with the MEDA Transportation Group and MDOC to discuss plan amendments and further coordination between the groups. This working group provides MDT with an opportunity to share information with and solicit ideas from local and state agencies. Key items from this meeting included:

- Continue regular meeting of the MEDA/DOC/MDT working group to share information and offer forums for new ideas;
- Explore opportunities to use other economic development or local government groups such as the Certified Regional Development Corporations (CRDCs) as a channel for regional economic and land use oriented outreach activities;

- Provide resources to and work with local officials through meetings and workshops to increase knowledge of transportation system needs and requirements using portfolios of current and expected future transportation system characteristics, impacts, and statistics;
- Provide training, analysis tools, or technical support to help local governments meet these requirements;
- Solicit local governments for and consider and evaluate their suggestions for research topics, corridor plans, and other areas of joint interest;
- Work with local governments and other agencies to develop a plan for and jointly maintain rest stops and other traveler facilities in the State of Montana.

### ***Metropolitan Planning Organizations***

As part of this limited amendment, a review of existing MPO long-range transportation plans was conducted for compliance with SAFETEA-LU MPO requirements. The detailed information for this review is presented in the *Task 2.9 Draft Report*. The following plans for the three metropolitan planning organizations in Montana were reviewed:

- *2005 Billings Urban Area Transportation Plan;*
- *2003 Great Falls Area Transportation Plan; and*
- *Missoula 2004 Transportation Plan.*

In addition, MPO representatives have been informed of the Limited Amendment to *TranPlan 21* and were provided with the opportunity to cooperate in the limited amendment process. MPOs participated in initial discussions of the limited amendment's purpose, participated in detailed discussions with MDT about their current and expected future long-range transportation plan and TIP processes, and reviewed and commented on the draft reports and associated material being produced as part of this planning process.

### ***Non-Metropolitan Local Officials***

MDT has a documented, formal process for consultation with non-metropolitan local officials on transportation planning and programming issues as required by Section 135 of 23 U.S.C. and 23 CFR Section 450.214(h). Although the process is separate from MDT's statewide public involvement process, the two processes complement and support each other. Montana's process is designed around three key goals:

1. *Inclusive*---the process provides Montana's local elected and appointed officials with multiple opportunities to participate in MDT planning and programming processes.
2. *Flexible*---rather than a rigid one-size-fits-all approach, the process takes advantage of Montana's small population and accessible government by encouraging direct communication and customized issue specific processes.



3. *Cost-effective*---the process takes advantage of technology and is coordinated with existing processes wherever possible to ensure a cost-effective service to Montana's citizens.

## ■ New Consultations

SAFETEA-LU requires that the statewide transportation plan be developed in consultation with State, Tribal, and local agencies responsible for land use management, natural resources, environmental protection, conservation, and historic preservation. As part of this Limited Amendment of *TranPlan 21*, a new consultation process consisting of outreach interviews to land management agencies including Tribal governments and a review of available plans was conducted. This new consultation process adds to and builds upon the on-going corridor planning consultations implemented by MDT.

### Summary of Agency Interviews

Interviews were conducted with representatives from Federal and State resource agencies. The representatives were provided with information about the *TranPlan 21* and engaged in discussions about existing and expected future interagency efforts as well as appropriate plans, maps, or other resources to include during the review process. MDT has initiated numerous corridor studies throughout the State of Montana. During the development of these studies, MDT has coordinated with resource agencies. The feedback we are receiving indicates that the resource agencies consider this coordination beneficial. Various agencies have indicated that early consultation and coordination may have large benefits as projects move from the corridor planning stage in to the environmental process. This consultation and coordination allows resource agencies to bring forward areas of concern thus allowing for consideration during the environmental process.

#### *Federal Agencies*

**U.S. Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP)** – In response to MDT's outreach efforts, ACHP responded with a letter indicating that meeting attendance or provision of formal comments are not expected at this time in support of this Limited Amendment to *TranPlan 21*. ACHP retains the right to become involved in the review in the future if it is determined that involvement is warranted.

**U.S. Army Corps of Engineers** – Historically, interagency actions between MDT and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers occur primarily at the project-level. The Corps indicated that MDT's submission of preliminary documents for review, which allows the Corps to provide comment prior to submittal of a permit application and enables MDT to take these comments under consideration during the design process, was valuable to both parties. When resources permit, the Corps will continue to review such submittals and respond in a meaningful way to the MDT.

**U.S. Department of Agriculture, Montana Rural Development Office** – MDT did not receive a response to outreach efforts made to the U.S. Department of Agriculture as part of this limited amendment.

**U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)** – MDT and the BIA are subject to the same transportation planning regulations provided under the 23 CFR. Although divisions of the BIA are not required to produce transportation plans, they provide support to tribal governments in the development of long-range transportation plans and financially constrained TIPs. Formal interagency actions between the BIA and MDT include:

- MDT maintenance of state facilities between reservation boundaries, established by a Letter of Acknowledgement provided to the BIA.
- Memorandums of Agreement (MOAs) established for CTEP projects on a project-by-project basis.
- Section 132 Transfers which allow MDT to transfer money to BIA to build roads. Section 638 Transfers which allow the BIA to do the work for tribes and upon completion, the tribes can assume a portion or entire program and enter into self determination agreements/contracts to do the work.

**U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management (BLM)** – Interaction between MDT and the BLM generally occurs during the project-level permitting process. MDT will submit a 710 Letter informing the BLM field office about projects that may require permits due to right-of-way, special mitigations, or critical river area concerns. Upon receipt, the BLM will comment and, if needed, work with MDT to minimize concerns and obtain the necessary permits and authorizations to proceed. Formal, policy level agreements between the agencies do not exist at this time. Resource Management Plans (RMPs) are produced by BLM field offices. RMPs analyze actions taken in an environmental impact statement and outline management of surface and subsurface lands. The BLM is in the process of updating RMPs in the state of Montana.

**U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation (BOR)** – The state of Montana includes two BOR regions: the Great Plains Region and Upper Columbia Region. If a project involves BOR facilities, MDT will contact the BOR to conduct an engineering review and approve designs which may involve special use permits. If it is determined that a project affects operations and maintenance activities, the BOR will direct MDT to work with local irrigation districts handling those activities.

**U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Yellowstone National Park** – Formal agreements do not exist between Yellowstone National Park and MDT but it is expected that the highway patrol, county, and park work together on an on-going basis. Examples of current efforts are roadway maintenance on the Beartooth Highway and Highway 191. Another example is E-Blast, an information sharing program providing weekly road updates illustrating delays and closures in the Yellowstone National park region.

**U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Glacier National Park (GLAC)** – MDT and Glacier are currently engaged in several joint efforts. The 511 system is the first Cooperative Agreement partnership between MDT and GLAC. Through this agreement, Glacier National Park road information is added to MT-511, allowing visitors to obtain roadway information from a single source. A Transit Cooperative Agreement is also in negotiation between MDT, Glacier National Park, and Flathead County. This agreement would allow GLAC transit buses to be used by other agencies during the off-season.

**U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)** – Under NEPA and Section 309, the EPA has the authority to comment on MDT projects. Project-level interaction between the agencies begins with publication of a Notice of Intent (NOI) in the Federal Register for an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). MDT often notifies the EPA of upcoming projects prior to publication of the NOI. The EPA provides comments during the scoping and EIS or EA process.

**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service** – A representative from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has been dedicated exclusively to MDT and works with MDT to identify impacts and associated mitigation measures. In addition to this project-level impacts assessment, the agencies have joined together in mapping efforts addressing heritage programs and connectivity. Other joint planning efforts, such as the Swan Valley Grizzly Bear Conservation, tend to be site specific. MDT participates in the Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee (IGBC) and Interagency Review Team (IRT) efforts.

**U.S. Forest Service** – The U.S. Forest Service 2005 planning rule, moving from project-level to policy-level planning, has not yet been implemented due to legal challenges. As a result, programmatic forest plans have not been updated to the policy-level format. The Forest Service expressed the desire to coordinate with MDT on a strategic, programmatic basis to address the following items:

- Loss of open space;
- Recreation and tourism;
- Wildlife habitat connectivity;
- Aquatic species connectivity; and
- Invasive species spreading due to transportation.

### ***State Agencies***

**Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)** – The DEQ is considered a cooperating agency under Federal legislation and will provide comment on MDT projects. Conceptual plans and designs for MDT projects are provided to the DEQ for review. After review, the DEQ provides comments and, if needed, guidance to obtain permits.

**Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks** – At this time, MDT and the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks interact at the project-level. There is a national policy shift for fish and wildlife managers to manage comprehensively in order to prevent additional listings of species under the endangered species act. Comprehensive strategies

have been prepared and approved for all 50 states that identify species and habitats in critical need of conservation in order to curb their decline and prevent listing. A potential interagency action arising from this effort considers the use of MDT project mitigation dollars by Fish, Wildlife, and Parks for matching Federal money.

**Montana Department of Natural Resources (DNRC)** – Interaction between MDT and DNRC occurs primarily if a need for easements arises at the project level. DNRC also has the ability to assist in non-trust lands.

**Montana Historical Society** – The Historic Roads and Bridges Agreement between MDT and the Montana Historical Society was developed in compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act. This agreement encourages rehabilitation rather than rebuilding of certain historic structures. Other potential areas of interagency efforts include rest areas and roadway signage.

## **Plan Review**

Federal, state, regional, and tribal agency long range and regional transportation plans were reviewed as part of the new consultations process for this Limited Amendment of *TranPlan 21*. The plans were identified by agency representatives during the interview process. The depth with which transportation is addressed in each plan varies by agency. Some agencies, such as the Department of Environmental Quality or the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, include transportation related action items. Others, such as the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, are limited in discussion of transportation issues. During this review of other agency plans, MDT found passages in which the level of involvement differed from the level initially committed. This could be resolved by ensuring that MDT be considered a reviewing agency during the development of a plan and notified of plans prior to their finalization. The following agency plans and documents were reviewed as part of the new consultations process for the Limited Amendment of *TranPlan 21*:

### ***Federal Agency Plans and Documents***

#### **U.S. Bureau of Land Management:**

- *U.S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Land Management Land Use Planning Handbook*, March 2005; and
- *Record of Decision and Dillon Resource Management Plan*, February 2006.

#### **U.S. Environmental Protection Agency:**

- *Draft Measures to Reduce Environmental Impact of Highway Projects*.

#### **U.S. Forest Service:**

- *Draft Roles and Responsibilities for Highway Project Coordination*;

- *Draft Implications and Opportunities of SAFETEA-LU Section 6001: Integrated Transportation and Conservation Planning; and*
- *Memorandum of Understanding between the United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service and United States Department of Transportation Federal Highways Administration Regarding the Appropriate and Transfer of National Forest System Lands for Highway Purposes, August 1998.*

**Glacier National Park:**

- *Glacier National Park Commercial Services Plan, January 2005;*
- *Glacier National Park General Management Plan, July 1999; and*
- *Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) - Visitor information products outside the park (Draft).*

**Yellowstone National Park:**

- *Yellowstone National Park Parkwide Road Improvement Plan Environmental Assessment, February 1992.*

**State Agency Plans and Documents**

**Montana Department of Environmental Quality:**

- *Montana Nonpoint Source Management Plan Public Review Draft, April 2007.*

**Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks:**

- *Strategic Plans Fiscal Year 2008-2009;*
- *Montana's Comprehensive Fish & Wildlife Conservation Strategy, 2005; and*
- *Implementation Planning Process for Montana's Comprehensive Fish and Wildlife Conservation Strategy 2005-2011.*

**Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation:**

- *Real Estate Management Programmatic Plan, Final Environmental Impact Statement, July 2005; and*
- *Memorandum of Understanding between Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) and the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC), January 1997.*

**Montana Historical Society:**

- *Montana Historic Preservation Plan 2003-2007; and*
- *Programmatic Agreement Among the Federal Highway Administration, the Montana Department of Transportation, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and the Montana State Historic Preservation Office Regarding Historic Roads and Bridges Affected by Montana Department of Transportation Undertakings in Montana.*

## ***Tribal Long-Range Transportation Plans***

Memorandums of understanding (MOUs) are established between MDT and each of the Tribal governments. These MOUs allow construction of MDT projects on their reservations. In addition, the following long-range transportation plans were reviewed:

- *Blackfeet Indian Nation Transportation Planning Study*, March 2006;
- *Chippewa-Cree Tribes of the Rocky Boy's Reservation Long Range Transportation Plan Final Report*, February 2006;
- *Crow Reservation Long Range Transportation Plan Final Report*, February 2006;
- *Northern Cheyenne Reservation Long Range Transportation Plan Final Report*, February 2006; and
- *Assiniboine & Sioux Tribes of the Fort Peck Reservation Long Range Transportation Plan Final Report*, February 2006.

## ■ **Draft TranPlan 21 Policy Amendments**

One of the major findings of the new consultations was the need for continuous interagency involvement throughout the planning process. Existing MDT actions and components of *TranPlan 21* are already in compliance with SAFETEA-LU interagency consideration requirements. The following amendments are recommended to encourage continuation of the interagency involvement process.

### ***Roadway System Performance***

Add the following action items:

- **Action B.7** –Use the corridor planning process to consult with resource agencies in identification of environmental sensitivities, avoidance areas, or potential mitigation measures (also in Task 2.3)
- **Action A.6** – Investigate the potential use of advanced mitigation opportunities such as using MDT mitigation funds for Fish, Wildlife, and Parks federal match funds.

Revise supporting text for the following action item to include:

- **Action A.2** – Provide and disseminate transportation system performance information.  
MDT maintains a GIS database of roadway systems information and will, upon request, provide data and support to other agency efforts. Shared data provided to MDT directly or through NRIS provides a means of consideration of other agency through the planning process. In turn, MDT provision of its resources supports and reciprocates these efforts. MDT will continue to make this data available to other agencies for their consideration.

- **Action C.2** – Identify and deploy cost-effective Intelligent Transportation Systems applications to improve safety and system productivity.

MDT and Glacier National Park are currently working together to maintain a comprehensive 511-service for travelers. When appropriate, MDT will continue to seek and pursue opportunities to work with other agencies to further ITS applications.

### *Economic Development*

Revise the following action items or supporting text to read:

- **Action B.2** – Identify and address deficiencies in the strategic transportation network.

This action can be accomplished through dialogue with leaders of growth industries to determine their needs and obtain input on strategies to address them. The action item also includes working with local entities to identify deficiencies in the strategic transportation system. These efforts would be further supported through technical analysis to forecast travel demand on the network. The deficiencies could be addressed through construction, advocacy, or policy changes. The action would be coordinated with local economic development organizations, MPOs, and local jurisdictions.

- **Action C.1** – Continue to support business retention, recruiting, and other related activities of the Governor’s Office of Economic Development, Montana Economic Developers Association (MEDA), Certified Regional Development Corporations (CRDCs), and the Montana Department of Commerce (MDOC).
- **Action D.3** – Coordinate with federal agencies, tribal governments, neighboring states, and Canadian provinces.

This action involves continued coordination with the appropriate federal, state, tribal, and other agencies that develop and manage resources in Montana. The activities of these agencies can affect travel throughout the State and sometime generate special transportation needs. Coordinated actions include efforts to promote tourism with the National Park Service, Montana Historic Preservation Office, and MEDA through activities such as expanded Transit 511 service, historic roadway and bridges signage, and rest area improvements. Continuation and expansion of coordinated efforts, resources permitting, will allow MDT to coordinate its planning and investment decisions with such activities.

- **Action E.7** – Designate an MDT point of contact that will receive and disseminate information from or to other agencies.

### *Access Management*

Revise the following policy goal supporting text and action item:

- **Policy Goal A** – Improve corridor level access management to preserve the highway system.

The primary purpose of this policy is to maintain the functional integrity and safety of the highway system through access management and corridor preservation. The tools available for access management are the acquisition of access rights, the consistent application of approach standards, the establishment of limited access facilities, the issuance of approach permits, and coordination with local jurisdictions. The consideration of access management in corridor plans and local transportation plans also serve as important tools in meeting this policy goal.

- **Action A.4** – Continue to use existing and see out new interagency channels to communicate the performance benefits arising from an access management policy.

### ***Land Use Planning***

Add the following action items:

- **Action A.5** – Provide support and respond to requests for review and information from local agencies in a timely manner while encouraging them to reciprocate.

### ***Traveler Safety***

- **Action B.1** – Establish and maintain high-level statewide inter-agency coordination to improve traveler safety and develop an agenda for action.

In addition to use of the Interagency Coordinating Council, MDT will continue joint efforts with the National Park Service at Yellowstone and Glacier National Parks and efforts undertaken with the Montana Historic Preservation Office to provide and maintain facilities and real-time information to travelers throughout the State.

### ***Public Transportation***

- **Action A.1** – Support local promotional/education programs to publicize public transportation opportunities.

This action includes MDT coordination with and support of local efforts to publicize the availability of public transportation encourages its use. A major emphasis in the program will be in changing people's attitudes about public transportation and then their actions. Potential riders will have to be educated on how to use the available services and reassured as the service's safety, reliability, and convenience. Promotional activities should communicate "what's in it for me" to the potential rider in the most specific terms.

- **Action A.2** – Ensure highway improvements address public transportation needs.

This action considers transit infrastructure needs in advance project planning and design. Including public transportation in the initial stages of urban highway improvement projects makes public transportation an integral part of the area's transportation network and reduces the need for expensive and disruptive retrofits of the street and highway network. Bus pullouts, sidewalks, and park and ride lots are easier to build as part of the highway project than add later. The recommendation is applicable to fixed route systems. In urban areas, fixed route transit system needs



should be included in metropolitan planning organizations and urban area long-range plans. When applicable, MDT will coordinate with local entities to ensure highway improvements address public transportation needs.

- **Action A.4** – Coordinate state planning, urban area and transit system development planning and management.

This action will ensure further coordination between planning and management of highway and transit systems by increasing transit agency participation in urban area planning, either through participation on policy committees or more involvement in technical committees. In turn, there will be state interest in the transit development planning undertaken by the transit systems. Where applicable, efforts should also be made to coordinate with local transit systems planning and management. These transit plans should offer mechanisms to evaluate transportation demand management and innovative service initiatives in Montana's urban areas. In addition, transit development plans should identify any associated highway improvements necessary for enhancing transit.